

WASHINGTON.

"LIBERTY AND UNION, NOW AND FOREVER, ONE AND INSEPARABLE."

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 1863.

IMPERIAL DEMOCRACY.

It may be known to most readers that the present Corps Legislatif of the French Empire has been dissolved by the expiration of its term, and that new members are to be elected by the people on the 31st of May and the 1st of June, the polls being kept open during two days for the reception and registry of votes. The suffrage is universal, and the aggregate number of the electors amounts to about ten millions. They vote by secret ballot and not *à viva voce*.

In anticipation of the elections which impend, Mr. F. DE PERSIGNY, the Minister of the Interior, has issued a circular letter, under date of the 8th instant, addressed to the Prefects of the Empire, apprising them of the conditions under which the elections are to be held and of the principles which are to serve as their guide in presiding over this renewed appeal of the present Emperor to the people of France. This circular is interesting for the light it sheds on the manner in which the right of popular suffrage is understood by the Government and exercised by the people of France. Interesting in itself, as being an attempt to combine the popular institutes of universal suffrage with the rigid forms of imperialism, it is also interesting for the comparison which Mr. de Persigny suggests to the disadvantage of the French as compared with the English people, when he states that the former must accept this franchise under certain limitations and restrictions to which the latter are not subject, because of the greater stability attaching to the foundations of political power in England, where no strife of parties relates to the form or substance of the Government. If in France, as in Great Britain, parties were divided only as to the conduct of affairs, while remaining equally loyal to the fundamental institutions of the realm, the Government of the Emperor, says the Minister, could limit itself, in all elections, to the simple function of a spectator marking the struggle of diverse opinions. But in a country which, after so many convulsions, has not been firmly established on its present basis more than ten years, this regular play of parties, which, among the British people, "so happily fecundates the public liberties," could not be as yet limited without prolonging the spirit of revolution and compromising the cause of civil liberty. For in France, he adds, there are "parties" which have not yet emerged from the temper or postponed the aims of "faction." Formed from the wreck of fallen Governments, and still surviving, though more and more weakened daily by the lapse of time, which alone can cause them to disappear, they seek to strike at the heart of established institutions in France only in order to pervert their genius, and invoke the maxims of liberty only to turn them to the destruction of the State.

It is under these circumstances and with these views that M. de Persigny addresses the following instructions to the Prefects of the Empire:

"Give free scope to all candidates to announce themselves and to publish and disseminate their political creeds and their electoral tickets according to the forms prescribed by law. Keep a vigilant eye to the maintenance of order and to the regularity of the electoral operations. It is for all right and for you a duty to resist with energy all disloyal manoeuvres, all intrigues, surprise, and fraud, in order to insure public liberty, and to preserve the purity of the elective franchise alike in the reception and counting of the votes."

"The suffrage is free. But, in order that the good faith of the people may not be deceived by artifices of language or equivocal professions of faith, you will publicly designate, as in preceding elections, the candidates in whom the Government most confides. Let the people know who are the friends and who the adversaries, more or less disguised, of the Empire, and then let them pronounce in all freedom, but with a perfect understanding of the facts in the case."

It further appears from the circular of M. de Persigny that the Government has recommended for re-election the great majority of the members of the late Corps Legislatif as being men of "approved devotion, and who, before receiving the patronage of the Administration, had been already designated by the partiality of their fellow citizens." If certain deputies "among the number of those who have voted against the opinion of the Government in a matter of importance are found no longer to share the official patronage," it is not to be presumed, M. de Persigny blandly says, "that their vote has entered at all into the decision made in such cases." If this is to be taken literally the French people must indeed have great faith in the judicial impartiality of their ruler.

This exposition of "electoral operations" in France is full of instruction to the student of politics who is accustomed to trace the working of institutions, whether popular or imperial, under their different manifestations. Institutes which are the offspring of democracy do not seem to be altogether at home in the midst of the imperial eagle. Especially do we see how hard it is to exercise the prerogatives of freedom in a country where even the forms of freedom, such as they are, have been rather given as the boons of yesterday than received as the priceless heritage won by ancestral valor and handed piously down from generation to generation until they have become familiar and dear as household words. Between institutions established by the favor of a sovereign and those which are the outgrowth of national tendencies and the consummate flower of national traditions, there is all the difference that exists between the frail exotic of the hot-house and the giant oak of the primeval forest.

We see, too, in the prudential *managements* with which the French Minister thinks it proper to hedge about the right of suffrage in France a solemn warning against imperialism on the one hand and faction on the other. If the French people still need to be guided by the leading "rings of the Government in the exercise of this franchise, it is, says M. de Persigny, because they have not yet learned, like their British neighbors, so to discriminate between political discussions and revolutionary "agitations as to be able at all times to give full scope to the former without incurring the danger of the latter. And this admonition, as it now comes to us, the lineal descendants of this same British race, amid scenes of political strife that have degenerated into flagrant civil

war, can hardly be read by the most thoughtless without a feeling of regret mingled with self-reproach. And among all the theoretical anomalies and practical derangements inflicted on our political system by the heresy and crime of secession, there is no evil that threatens to be more wide-spread and enduring than the shock it has given to the uniformity of our political traditions, by breaking down the mounds and dykes within which all the political thought and activity of the country formerly moved, making glad the land, whose peace flowed like a river in spite of the turbid agitations stirred by the spirit of party. Now that the bitter waters of strife have broken from their proper embankments, they not only eat up mire and dirt, but have opened an issue of blood in the body politic, and where is the angel who shall descend to impart healing to the already troubled pool or bid its surging waters return within their appointed bounds?

DEFEND THE RIGHT.

The profound sensibility of the public mind to the illegal proceedings of Gen. Burnside in the military arrest, trial, and conviction of a citizen of Ohio for an offence which, under recent statutes, is made cognizable by the courts of the United States, has been sufficiently demonstrated during the last two weeks. And in view of this expression of popular opinion, we think there is little danger that this anomalous case will be recorded for a precedent. It will rather stand as a warning to all who may be tempted in a similar manner to allow their zeal to outrun their discretion in the military service of their country, whose loyal population, in waging a war for the maintenance of law and order in the South, do not wish to see the reign of arbitrary power established at their own doors, and this without the plea of "necessity," which the last Congress took away by its statutes made and provided to meet just such emergencies as Gen. Burnside assumed to settle by the summary process of court-martial.

Among the indications of public opinion on this question perhaps none is more significant than that afforded by the discussions had in the recent convention of "Loyal Leagues" which met at Utica, New York, a few days ago. The moral of these discussions is drawn to this effect by that considerate Administration journal, the Boston Daily Advertiser, a paper which always treats the constituted authorities with the respect that is due to them, but which, in its comments on public affairs, seeks also to remember what is due to itself and to truth. Like ourselves the Advertiser is supposed by some people to be a little "old-fashioned," and it is very possible that those who make a merit of giving an "unquestioning support" to the Administration may think it a great superfluity that any body, in his love of country or his respect for law, should be anxious to have the constituted authorities always in the right, when to "unquestioning" supporters it must be a matter of indifference whether the Administration is in the right or in the wrong.

After reciting the purport of the proceedings had in the Utica Convention, and after stating that the committee on resolutions did not abandon the attempt to procure from the meeting a formal condemnation of the illegal proceedings of Gen. Burnside, until the fact had been developed that besides the committee a large section of the Convention was in favor of this expression of opinion, and that a portion of the remainder probably regarded the position taken in the resolutions as right, but were reluctant even to seem to censure an act which the Administration, in full view of its responsibilities and with undoubted purity of intention, had seen fit to sustain, our Boston contemporary proceeds as follows:

"We must also call attention to the fact that of the public journals which support the Administration, in the middle of the Eastern States, only a very small part have been willing to commit themselves in favor of the action taken in this case; others have done so only upon the avowed principle of supporting whatever decision might be arrived at by the Administration; while many, and we think the majority, including as well those of radical tendencies as those which favor a conservative policy, have openly expressed their regret. Only one Administration journal in New York for example, the Times, has been willing to endorse the wisdom of the action in this case. At the West, approval is more common; but we do not know that, fairly considered, this would be held to be a very authoritative endorsement."

"It is not a grateful task for us to rehearse even these qualified strictures upon the course which the Government has thought it best to pursue. But it has seemed to us to be our duty, before dismissing this subject, to point out to the friends of the Administration do not look with indifference upon any error, however well meant, which tends to the establishment of precedents injurious to our liberties and the security of our institutions; and that, in particular, as a matter of course, we do not know that the least—and those neither the least active nor the least deserving of consideration—apprehend that the necessity for the action resolved upon was not so obvious as to free the example from danger. The fact is one which wise statesmen will not fail to note and to appreciate as it deserves."

OUR BLOCKADING FLEET.

According to an official report made to Rear Admiral Davis, the line of coast guarded by our blockading fleet is three thousand five hundred and forty-nine miles long, without counting the indentations of the harbors and ports. And in this coast there are one hundred and eighty-nine openings, either rivers, bays, harbors, inlets, sounds, or passes.

The mere statement of these facts will suffice to give the reader some idea of the magnitude of the operations conducted by the Navy Department under this head alone. The efficiency with which they are conducted is sufficiently attested by the price of all imported articles in the South, and may also be read from time to time in the proceedings of our Prize Courts. The difficulty of effecting guard against the Southern coast has resulted not only from its great extent and from the number of its openings, but has been still further enhanced, as a New York contemporary suggests, by the enterprise and ingenuity of the foreign traders, who, enticed by the hope of commercial gain, have constructed swift-going steam vessels for the purpose of eluding our cruisers, and finding access to the secluded ports. Yet in spite of these difficulties the blockade commands itself to the justice of all maritime nations as being "effective" in the fullest sense of the term.

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

The official canvass of the votes cast for members of Congress in this State show the following result:

Dist. 1.	Republican	11,979	Democrat	12,659
2.	H. R. Hines	10,365	J. H. H. George	9,900
3.	J. W. Patterson	10,947	William Barnes	10,571
Total Rep. vote		33,291	Democrat	
		33,291	33,291	
		Republican majority in the State		662

THE WORDS OF A GOOD MAN.

Montesquieu has said that private and public virtue is not only the foundation of Republics, but the condition of their existence. The logic of the proposition commends itself to every thoughtful mind, and its truth has been demonstrated by the experience and observation of men throughout all ages. As Burke was wont to say, with that sound political philosophy which penetrates all his political writings, men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put moral chains on their own appetites; in proportion as their love of justice is above their rapacity; in proportion as their soundness and sobriety of understanding are above their vanity and presumption; in proportion as they are more disposed to listen to the counsels of the wise and good than to lend an ear to the flattery of the demagogues who are to the mob what courtiers are to the monarch.

The counsels of the wise and good are always timely, and our eye having a few days ago fallen on the subjoined observations of the late Dr. CHANNING, we determined to cite them as the admonitory words of one whose intellect was as enlightened as his heart was warm and patriotic:

"The great distinction of a nation—the only one worth possessing, and which brings after it all other blessings—is the prevalence of pure principle among the citizens. I wish to belong to a State in the character and institutions of which I may find a spring of improvement which I may speak of with an honest pride; in whose records I may meet great and good men, and whose history I may find the world its debtor by its discoveries of truth, and by an example of virtuous freedom. O, save me from a country which worships wealth, and cares not for true glory; in which intrigue bears rule; in which patriotism borrows its name from the prostitute; in which hungry systems plant through with supplication all the departments of State; in which public men bear the brand of private vice, and the seat of government is a noisome sink of private licentiousness and public corruption."

"Tell me not of the honor of belonging to a free country. I ask, does your country deserve it? Does it sit at its own feet in its spirit, in public virtue, above countries trodden under foot by despotism? Tell me not of the extent of our country. I care not how large it is, if it multiply degenerate men. Speak not of our prosperity. Better be one of a poor people, plain in manners, reverencing God, and respecting themselves, than belong to a rich country which knows no higher good than riches. Earnestly do I desire for this country, that, instead of exporting Europe with an undisciplined servility, it may have a character of its own, corresponding to the freedom and equality of our institutions. One Europe is enough. One Europe is enough. How much to be desired is it that, separated as we are from the eastern continent by an ocean, we should be still more widely separated by simplicity of manners, by domestic purity, by inward piety, by reverence for the future, by more independence, by withholding the sanction to fashion, and that debilitating sensuality which characterizes the most civilized portions of the Old World! Of this country, I may say, with peculiar emphasis, that its happiness is bound up in its virtue!"

STRENUOUS DULLNESS.

The laws cited by us a few days ago as having been enacted by the last Congress to meet such cases as those created by the charge and specifications brought against Mr. Vallandigham, were so explicit and precise in their terms that they were not capable of being misunderstood by any body who can read. In quoting these statutes we assumed that, in the multiplicity of their duties, the President and Gen. Burnside had equally forgotten that there were any such enactments made and provided to meet the "emergency" produced by the intemperate speeches of Mr. Vallandigham in Ohio or of Mr. Wendell Phillips in New York.

The great mass of our contemporaries, where they have taken any notice of the matter, concur with the opinion expressed by the New York Evening Post when it said, with these statutes before it, that there was "no escape from the plain demands of the law, even if there were a desire to do so." The law may be forgotten or disregarded, but it cannot be mistaken.

We find, however, in the columns of the Cincinnati Gazette a vigorous attempt to simulate opacity on this subject, but, with all his efforts to do some violence to his understanding, the writer succeeds only in demonstrating his inability to impose on his own intelligence the obfuscations with which he seeks to dim the vision of less sagacious readers.

The only other case of strenuous dullness which has come under our notice on this point is that of a correspondent who writes for the New York Times from "The Beeches," (wherever that is,) under the signature of "Veteran Observer," and who, in a recent communication to that journal, endeavors to mystify himself, if not the subject, as follows:

"The Intelligence quotes the Statutes of the last Congress to show that Congress had conferred full jurisdiction over this case, and directed the courts how to proceed. True. But the mistake of the Intelligence is in assuming that, because Congress has conferred this jurisdiction on the civil courts, that, therefore, it took from military commanders and military courts their power and jurisdiction in matters which were necessary to the purposes of war. It did no such thing. Let me say, it is not in the constitution of Congress that it is in the power of Congress to declare, the President alone is charged with the mode and measure of its execution, and it is not in the power of Congress to cut down the Executive power over the proceedings of the army in the least particular."

Here is logic. The last Congress passed laws conferring on the courts full jurisdiction over "this case." The President, who is the head of the Executive Government, approved these laws. In the first case that brings them to public knowledge they are disregarded and set aside by military force, and this because the President, says a "Veteran Observer," signed laws which were "unconstitutional" in the limitations they impose on his belligerent authority. "It is not in the power of the Congress," he adds, "to cut down the Executive power over the proceedings of the army in the least particular." What a vast mass of legislation enacted by the last Congress this luminous declaration sweeps away! Under it the maxim that "the King can do no wrong" will hold good of our President as long as he has an army in the field. Fortunately, we have in Mr. Lincoln a President who, if liable like other men to lapses of memory or errors of judgment, has perspicacity enough to preserve him from being beguiled by such sophisms.

SUMMARY OF EVENTS FOR MAY.

1. Occupation of Chancellorsville, Va. Battle of Port Gibson, Miss.
2. Battle of Chancellorsville.
3. Storming of Marye's Hill and capture of Fredericksburg, Va.
4. Rebels retreat from the Nanamond.
5. Capture of Col. Strathairn's forces near Rome, Ga.
6. Gen. Sedgwick retreats across the Rappahannock.
7. Skirmish near Chancellorsville.
8. Gen. Hooker recrosses the Rappahannock.
9. Battle of Clinton, Miss.
10. Capture of Alexandria, La.
11. Bombardment of Fort Hudson.
12. Battle of Raymond, Miss.
13. Battle of Mississippi Springs.
14. Capture of Jackson, Miss.
15. Battle of Carville, Va.
16. Warren, Mississippi, destroyed.
17. Battle of Champion, Miss.
18. Battle of Back River Bridge, Miss.
19. Capture of Haines's Bluff.
20. Battle of Andrus, Miss.
21. Battle of Gum Swamp, N. C.

THE EARTH'S LAST GREAT SECRET.

The discovery of the sources of the Nile is properly treated by our intelligent contemporaries as one of those events which mark an epoch in the progress of human knowledge.

It has been given to the present age to solve this interesting geographical problem, as also that of the Northwest passage; and although in neither case do the discoveries which have been made promise much direct practical advantage to mankind, who would be willing to spare from the records of heroic achievement the narrative which recites the "patient search and vigil long" of the brave and constant men who have finally succeeded in plucking from the earth the heart of these great mysteries, and in thus extending the boundaries of knowledge? One by one the great riddles of Tellus have been guessed, until only a few years ago one of the most industrious of American travellers could say that "since Columbus first looked upon San Salvador the earth had but one emotion of triumph left in her bestowal, and that she reserved for him who shall drink from the fountains of the White Nile." It has been given to Captain Speke, an Englishman, to realize this ultimate "emotion," as from the depths of an unknown land he cries *Eureka!*

As might have been expected, this achievement forms no exception to the general rule which demands enthusiasm combined with fortitude as the condition of success in any undertaking of high emprise. In a letter addressed to Sir Roderick Murchison, printed in the English journals received by the last mail from Europe, the fortunate discoverer writes:

"I said I would do it, and I have done it. The Victoria Nyarua is the great reservoir of the sacred Bahr el Abiad, (White Nile.)"

The Morning Chronicle announces its purpose to "take an early occasion to show that the same spirit which induced Gen. Lafayette to deplore the Intelligence's indifference to the cause of liberty nearly forty years ago animates and controls it to-day when the nation implores the aid and counsel of all its citizens." We are glad to see that our neighbor intends at least to pay a tribute to the Intelligence's consistency in "the cause of liberty," by showing that its present course is in the line of the traditions which have marked its character for the last forty years. If we are unable to return the compliment which the Chronicle proposes to pay to our consistency "in the cause of liberty," it is only because we remember too well the "unquestioning" devotion of its conductor, down to a very recent day, to the "cause of slavery"—a fact which we adduce not so much to his reproach as because the recency of his conversion serves to explain his present "unquestioning" zeal in the cause of "freedom" as well as the embrace he naturally takes at a uniformity of political conduct running through forty years. Notwithstanding the completeness and clarity with which he has executed the difficult Irish performance of "turning his back on himself," we do not for a moment doubt that he is just as honest in now fighting for the cause of "emancipation" as he formerly was in fighting for the extension of "human bondage."

RETALIATORY LETTER OF GEN. HUNTER.

Our latest accounts from Port Royal are to the effect that Gen. HUNTER had issued an order drafting into the military service all able-bodied men, not in the employ of the Government, who may be found in the department after the 15th of June. The following letter from him to Gen. Jefferson Davis is also published:

HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE SOUTH.
Port Royal, S. C., April 23, 1863.

The United States flag must protect all its defenders, white, black, or yellow. Several negroes in the employ of the Government, in the Western Department, have been cruelly murdered by your authorities, and others sold into slavery. Every outrage of this kind against the laws of war and humanity, which may take place in this Department, shall be followed by the immediate execution of the rebel of highest rank in my possession: man for man, these executions will certainly take place, for every one murdered or sold into slavery more than death. On your authorities will rest the responsibility of having inaugurated this barbarous policy, and you will be held responsible, in this world and the world to come, for all the blood thus shed.

In the month of August last you declared all those engaged in arming the negroes to fight for their country to be felons, and directed the immediate execution of all such as should be captured. I have given you long enough to reflect on your folly. I now give you notice that, unless this order is rescinded, I will at once cause the execution of every rebel officer and rebel soldier in my possession. This and state of things may be kindly ordered by an all-wise Providence to induce the good people of the North to act earnestly and to realize that they are at war. Thousands of men may thus be saved.

The poor negro fighting for liberty is in the truest sense a man. Mr. Jefferson has beautifully said, "in such a war there is no attribute of the Almighty which will induce him to fight on the side of the oppressor." You say you are fighting for liberty. Yes, you are fighting for liberty—liberty to keep four millions of your fellow-beings in ignorance and degradation—liberty to separate parents and children, husband and wife, brother and sister—liberty to steal the products of their labor, exalted with many a cruel lash and bitter tear—liberty to induce their wives and children to do the same. You are fighting for liberty to kill these children with impunity when the murder cannot be proven by one of pure white blood. This is the kind of liberty—the liberty to do wrong—which Satan, chief of the fallen angels, was contending for when he rebelled against God.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your most obedient servant,
D. HUNTER, Major Gen. Commanding.

FROM EUROPE.

NEW YORK, JUNE 3.—The steamer *Pervia* has arrived, bringing Liverpool advices to the 23d ultimo.

Hooker's retreat attracts much comment. It is generally regarded as a miserable failure.

There is nothing new in European politics. Parliament is not in session.

The party who was alleged to be a Federal recruiting agent in the county of Cork turns out to be a swindler, and at last accounts had decamped.

It is announced that the cargoes of the ships *Nora*, *Louisa Hatch*, and *Charles Hill*, bound from England to the East Indies, and destroyed by the Alabama, were shipped by a consignee to British subjects. A letter from the captain of the ship *Nora*, burned by the Alabama off Pernambuco, states that he informed Semmes that his cargo was British, and also the captain of the ship *Charles Hill*; but the pirate burned them nevertheless. The British Government, it is supposed, will instantly take action in the matter.

The French electoral contest is waxing warmer. The opposition candidates are daily increasing. Persigny, in a letter to the Prefect of the Seine, denounces Thiers as being connected with the avowed enemies of the Emperor. The Bourne is flat.

Polish affairs remain unchanged. Engagements continue frequent, and there is no diminution of the insurgents. It is reported that Russia has called upon Prussia for military assistance.

IMPORTANT REPORTS FROM MEXICO.

NEW YORK, JUNE 1.—The steamer *Sheldrake*, from Havana on the 26th of May, arrived this afternoon.

An extract of the Havana Diario, of the 26th, received by the *Sheldrake*, reports the arrival at Havana of a French war steamer, the *Darien*, from Vera Cruz, with important despatches from Gen. Forey, announcing the occupation of Puebla by the forces under his command. The prisoners include Ortega and twenty-three other Generals, and nine hundred minor officers and seven thousand men.

It appears that on the 16th, Forey opened with heavy artillery on Fort Toluquemecan, and on the next day a breach was effected. The French troops then made an assault, and, overcoming a desperate resistance, entered the plaza, when Ortega surrendered unconditionally. On the 20th one division of the French army started for the City of Mexico.

THE WAR.

We have no later news from Vicksburg. Richmond papers of Monday contain no news from the South later than has been already published.

We learn that Col. Kilpatrick's expedition to Urbana returned to the Rappahannock on Tuesday. The cavalry and infantry composing it destroyed a large amount of rebel stores and brought safely away several hundred horses. The gunboats, it is represented, performed an important part in driving the rebels away from the shore. The latter, it appears, made a bold attempt to recapture a part of the appropriated property, but were frustrated. The raid was highly successful.

NAVAL EXPEDITION AGAINST YAZOO CITY.

FLAGSHIP BLACK HAWK.
Mississippi Squadron, near Vicksburg, May 25.

Hon. GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy.
SIR: I have the honor to inform you that the expedition I sent up the Yazoo, under command of Lieut. Commander Walker, after taking possession of the forts at Haines Bluff, was perfectly successful. Three powerful steamers were destroyed at Yazoo City, one a monster three hundred and ten feet long, seventy feet beam, to be covered with 4-inch iron plates. A fine navy yard, with machine shops of all kinds, saw mills, blacksmith shops, &c. were burned up. The property destroyed and captured amounted to over two millions of dollars. Had the monster ram been finished she would have given us some trouble. One battery was destroyed at Drury's Bluff. Our loss on the expedition was one killed and seven wounded.

DAVID D. PORTER,
Acting Rear Admiral, Comd'g Mississippi Squadron.

NAVAL OPERATIONS AT VICKSBURG.

DESPATCHES TO THE SECRETARY OF NAVY.
MISSISSIPPI SQUADRON.
Flag Ship Black Hawk, May 25, 1863.
Hon. GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of Navy.

SIR: On the evening of the 21st I received a communication from Gen. Grant informing me that he intended to attack the whole of the rebel works at 10 A. M. the next day, and asking me to shell the batteries from 9:30 until 10:30 A. M. to annoy the garrison.

I kept six monitors playing rapidly on the works and town all night; sent the Benton, Mound City, and Carondelet up to shell the water batteries and other places where troops might be resting during the night.

At seven o'clock in the morning the Mound City proceeded across the river and made an attack on the hill batteries opposite the canal. At 8 o'clock I joined with the Benton, Tuscumbia, and Carondelet. All these vessels opened on the hill batteries and finally silenced them, though the main work (on the battery containing the heavy rifled gun) was done by the Mound City, Lieut. Com. Henry Wilson.

I then pushed the Benton, Mound City, and Carondelet up to the water batteries, leaving the Tuscumbia, which is still out of repair, to keep the hill batteries from firing on our vessels after they had passed by.

The three gunboats moved slowly, owing to the strong current, the Mound City leading, the Benton following, and the Carondelet astern. The water batteries opened furiously, supported by a hill battery on the starboard beam of the vessels. The vessels advanced to within four hundred yards, (by our marks,) and returned the fire for two hours without cessation—the enemy's fire being very accurate and incessant.

Finding that the hill batteries behind us were silenced, I ordered the Tuscumbia to within eight hundred yards of the batteries, but her turret was soon made untenable, not standing the enemy's shot, and I made her drop down.

I had been engaged with the forts an hour longer than Gen. Grant asked; the vessels had all received severe shots under water, which we could not stop while in motion; and not knowing what might be the result of the movements of the army, I ordered the vessels to drop out of fire, which they did in a cool, handsome manner.

This was the hottest fire the gunboats have ever been under, but owing to the water being more on a level with the batteries than usual, the shells fell in their shells so fast that the aim of the enemy was not very good. The enemy hit the vessels a number of times, but fighting how on the spot did little damage—not a man was killed and only a few wounded. I had only enough ammunition for a few moments longer, and set all hands to work to fill up from our depot below.

After dropping back I found that the enemy had taken possession again of one of the lower hill batteries, and was endeavoring to remount his guns, and had mounted a twelve pounder field piece to fire at Gen. McArthur's troops, which had landed a short time before at Warren's Landing. I sent the Mound City and Carondelet to drive him off, which they did in a few moments.

I beg leave to enclose a letter from Mr. McArthur explaining why he did not (to use his own expression) take advantage of the results gained by the gunboats. I have since learned through Gen. Grant that the army did assault at the right time vigorously. In the noise and smoke we could not see or hear it. The gunboats were, therefore, still fighting when the assault had proved unsuccessful.

The army had terrible work before them, and are fighting as well as soldiers ever fought before, but the works are stronger than any of us dreamed of. Gen. Grant and his soldiers are confident that the brave and energetic army will soon overcome all obstacles and carry the works.

DAVID D. PORTER,
Acting R. A. Com. Mississippi Squadron.

LOSS OF THE GUNBOAT CINCINNATI.

MISSISSIPPI SQUADRON, Flag-ship Black Hawk, near Vicksburg, May 27, 1863.

SIR: Amidst our successes, I regret to report any reverses, but we cannot expect to conquer a place like this without some loss. At the urgent request of Gen. Grant and Sherman I sent the Cincinnati to enfilade some rifle pits which barred the progress of the left wing of the army. Gen. Sherman supposed that the enemy had retreated, and he moved his heavy guns to the right bank of the river. The Cincinnati, however, seemed to have placed more on the water side than usual. The Cincinnati was sunk, and went down in short water by her flag flying. The enemy still fired on her, but she was not holed down. Twenty-five were killed and wounded and fifteen missing; the latter supposed to be drowned. The vessel can be raised. The pilot was killed early in the action.

DAVID D. PORTER,
A. R. A. Com. Miss. Squadron.

THE ARREST OF MR. VALLANDIGHAM.

PHILADELPHIA, JUNE 1.—The meeting to-night in Independence Square to protest against the arrest of Mr. Vallandigham was largely attended and quite enthusiastic. About ten thousand persons were assembled.

Judge Ellis Lewis occupied the chair. Speeches were made by Ex-Senator Bigler, Ex-Congressman Biddle, Chas. J. Ingersoll, and others. The latter counselled obedience to the laws and constitutional authorities, but resistance to any attempt to control the ballot-box.

Resolutions were adopted declaring the arrest and banishment of Vallandigham as an act of violence, to which the American people will not and ought not to submit, and that the remedy is at the ballot box at the coming election, when the State authority will be restored to the hands of the Democratic party. And the meeting resolved that it is a firm belief that the design of the authorities at Washington is by military aggression to provoke an apology for a further aggression on our liberties. That it is only by the ballot-box that we can look for permanent relief.

A RADICAL DEMOCRATIC PEACE MEETING.

NEW YORK, JUNE 3.—A Peace Convention was held this afternoon in the Cooper Institute. The principal feature of the meeting was the resolutions declaring loyalty to the Constitution and to the sovereignty of the States and of the people; that under the Constitution there is no power to coerce the States or any of them by military force; that the war is contrary to the Constitution; that the only end to it is to attempt to do away with the provisions of the Constitution which point out how crimes are to be punished, are high handed violations of the solemn duties of our rulers; that the claim of dictatorial and unlimited military power and trial of citizens by court-martial are monstrous and execrable; that the dogma of unlimited submission to the Executive branch of the Government is unworthy an American citizen; and that we protest against the cowardly, despotic, inhuman, and accursed act of the banishment of C. L. Vallandigham; and that we recommend a suspension of hostilities and the holding of a convention to settle the manner of recognizing the contending sections. And the meeting, in addition to the adoption of these resolutions, recommended the appointment of a State General Committee to call future Conventions of the Peace Democrats.

FROM MEXICO.

NEW YORK, JUNE 2.—The French Transport *Le Financiere*, from Vera Cruz on the 19th ultimo, arrived this afternoon. Her captain doubts the capture of Puebla, as dates from Puebla to the 16th of May, received at Vera Cruz, represented the Mexicans as then holding half of Puebla, and so strongly fortified that it would take a long time to capture them.

THE WAR IN LOUISIANA.

Our readers were informed yesterday that Port Hudson, on the Mississippi river, was about to be invested by the Union forces, and that on the 21st ultimo Gen. Augur's division was engaged in a nine hours' fight with the enemy. The battle-field was Port Hudson Plains, four miles in the rear of Port Hudson. The rebels had one brigade of infantry engaged, besides two batteries and a considerable force of cavalry. They had ambuscaded at every outlet from the plains, but were finally defeated, and our troops bivouacked for the night on the field of battle. Our loss in killed is twelve, and wounded fifty-six. The 116th New York and 2d Louisiana suffered the most.

GEN. BANKS MOVING ON PORT HUDSON.
The steamer *Geo. Cronwell* arrived at New York yesterday morning with three days later news.

The New Orleans Era of the 27th ultimo contains the following:

"Gen. Banks moved down Red river with his army and crossed to Bayou Sara, thence to Port Hudson, where he united his forces with Gen. Augur's. The gunboats, under Admiral Farragut, were to move up on the 2